



Statement in support of

**Senate Bill 497 – An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for
the United Community and Family Services in Norwich**

Public Health Committee

March 3, 2008

This statement is being submitted on behalf of the Members of the New London County Medical Association in strong support of **Senate Bill 497 – An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for the United Community and Family Services in Norwich.**

United Community and Family services (UCFS) has been providing healthcare and community services to the people of Norwich and the surrounding areas for over 130 years. Throughout the years, UCFS has been a provider of affordable, high quality health care and human services and that continues today even as the health care climate has changed. UCFS provides primary medical care, outpatient behavioral health services; community based behavioral health services, specialized services for the elderly and so much more.

As the delivering of healthcare becomes more and more complex and larger populations have difficulty accessing care, it is the constants of the community like UCFS that have enabled so many people in the Norwich area to receive the care that they deserve. Within the past few years, the number of annual visits to UCFS has grown from approximately 43,000 to 52,000. This has meant an obvious strain on resources and the need for change within UCFS. In order to accommodate the growing number of visits, UCFS has opened a satellite location. This location in Griswold will help to provide a full range of behavioral health services and primary care in a highly underserved area. Further renovation to the main health center will also be needed to serve a growing number of people. Of course these expansions come with a price and state help is needed in order for UCFS to be able to continue serving the people of the Norwich area.

The funds provided by the bill before you will enable UCFS to renovate its current location, bring on new providers and continue to expand UCFS. We cannot impress upon you enough how important UCFS has been and, with your help, continue to be a cornerstone of the Norwich community.

We respectfully request that you support Senate Bill 497

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